DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 172 206 CS 204 852

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TITLE Puppets and the Theater. Technical Note No. 12.

INSTITUTION Massachusetts Univ., Amherst. Center for International Education.; Ministerio de Educacion Publica, Quito (Ecuador).
SPONS AGENCY Agency for International Development (Dept. of State), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 31p.
AVAILABLE FROM Center for International Education, 285 Hills House South, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts 01003 ($1.00)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; Adult Education Programs; *Community Programs; *Creative Dramatics; Developing Nations; Folk Drama; Foreign Countries; Library Programs; *Literacy Education; *Nonformal Education; Outdoor Drama; *Puppetry; *Theater Arts
IDENTIFIERS *Ecuador

ABSTRACT

This report examines a joint project of the University of Massachusetts and the Ecuador Ministry of Education which used puppet and "campesino" (folk) theater as a creative form for the presentation of numeracy and literacy programs and for introducing social consciousness concepts. It focuses on the use of the puppet theater in particular and includes specific guidelines for its presentation, including planning, community relations, and technical construction information. It discusses the 25 presentations that were given in 1974-1975 in different communities by the theater group using five types of theatrical expression: puppet theater, "cabezones" or huge heads, traditional campesino theater, social drama, and empirical theater in which the audience participates. It reports on the content of the plays, which was coordinated with the specific actual conditions of the sites where they were presented, representing situations in the life of the community. The report notes that the social-dramatic use of puppet theater was effective as a means of eliminating inhibitions and allowing the expression of artistic capacities in concrete form. It concludes with a description of a Bibliobus (library on wheels) program in Ecuador. (DF)

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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TECHNICAL NOTE NO.

12

PUPPETS AND THE THEATER

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SUMMARY: Discussion of the design and incorporation of theater techniques, such as the Campesino Theater and Puppets in an Educational Fair, and their use as instruments of literacy and consciousness awareness within rural communities.

TECHNICAL NOTES

ECUADOR NONFORMAL EDUCATION / EDUCACION EXTRA-ESCOLAR

This series of Technical Notes has been produced by staff members of the Ecuador Nonformal Education Project. Each note focuses on a particular issue or technique which has been developed and tested in Ecuador. The notes contain the information available at the time of writing and analytic comments based upon available evaluation data. However, the notes are in no way an evaluation of the project. Their purpose is to share ideas and information about new techniques as they are developed. Project staff want to encourage comments and suggestions from readers who may have had experience with similar techniques in other settings.

The project is financed by USAID and is a joint undertaking of the Ministry of Education in Ecuador and the Center for International Education at the University of Massachusetts. Ideas and materials derived from the ideas were created jointly by staff in Massachusetts and staff in Ecuador. All materials have undergone considerable change in the field as usage in various situations indicated needed modifications. The notes attempt to accurately credit the creators of each technique. In some cases, though, ideas have been modified by a variety of people and precise assignment of credit is difficult. In all cases, various members of the staff have made substantial inputs into the final version of the materials.

After three years of effort the number of people in Ecuador and in the United States who have made substantial contributions to this project is considerable. Rather than trying to enumerate the particular contributions of each, we will only note that this has been a genuine bi-national effort.

These Technical Notes are reports of work in progress and will be issued periodically as they are written. A small charge of $1.00 per copy will be made to partially defray the costs of reproduction and mailing. The Technical Notes are available in both English and Spanish and may be obtained by writing to:

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PUPPETS AND THE THEATER

INTRODUCTION

The process of social change necessarily involves the utilization of all resources that allow a people to become conscious of its own reality. It can not be a theoretical and empirical awareness, but one that is realistic and critical of the circumstances in which the people live.

How can we hope for a people to participate in social change if the doors of information and knowledge are closed to it, limiting the chances of success? Due to the fact that the system has enclosed the individual in an environment characterized by a lack of a means to learn, the individual, upon leaving his or her native environment, finds himself misplaced in society.

Education must permit the individual's direct participation in selecting what he wants, what is best suited for him, and how to successfully achieve this end. But to accomplish this, society must assume a more human attitude: the society must consider the equality of all peoples and allow direct participation in this process of change. If there is not mutual participation, this process will be false and the goals will seem obtainable only through the medium of violence.

The purpose of these notes is to make known the activities carried out by the Ecuador Project and University of Massachusetts team in relation to the puppet and campesino theater. Since the beginning of its activities, the Ecuador Project has been characterized by a continual search for new resources and skills that will aid the campesino to incorporate himself into the process of social change.

Within the Latin American tradition there exists an appreciation for the various theatrical forms such as the drama, the mime and the joke. Its use as entertainment and as a form of escape from reality,

are most known, but on many occasions the theater has reflected the prevailing situation of the times, although not always in a critical manner. In the urban areas, puppet shows have been used as a source of entertainment for the children. These and other artistic forms also have been used by indigenous groups in relating ancient legends of the Incan mythology (Mayan, Azteca). In many places masks and costumes are employed in order to dramatize even further the legends and events and describe tradition.

In Guatemala, for example, the indigenous group of the Quiche region continues the annual tradition of the presentation of the events of the conquest. Masks and costumes are used and the story is dramatized in dance form. The tradition is more than 400 years old. In Ecuador, there is concrete evidence of the existence of an aboriginal theater before the arrival of the Spaniards. This was generally presented at great ceremonies and fiestas. In Pillaro, for example, there is a "historical theatrical reenactment" of the conquest of Huayna-Capac, given in Quechua. In Pomasqui, the work, "Massacre of the Yumbo," is given with dialogues in Spanish. Recently, a drama has been discovered in a book published in Quechua and Spanish by Dr. Ricardo Desealzi entitled "Critical History of the Ecuadorian Theater". The drama is best known as "El Dium Dium" or "Los Quillacos" and its origen dates back to the 13th or 14th century. This work as performed in the language of the region of Achupallas, at that time the territory of the Puruhaes,, the Chimborazo of today.

A. Origen

During our visits to the campo, we were able to note the campesino's interest in the theater, through what they know as "la comedia". In certain places, at the time of a special fiesta in the community, the local professor found himself in charge of organizing a performance for the pueblo. Such a function usually consisted in the presentation of a type of dramatic play. The chosen themes are generally of a moralistic nature; such as the eternal triangle of love with the

outcomes in many cases, being tragic or comic, followed by forgiveness or death and then the attitude "nothing has happened here". A theme often represented is that of the mother, the wayward son who leaves home, the prodigal son who returns and the unselfish mother who forgives all the sufferings of poverty. We saw various presentations of this theme, which were almost always followed by a number of other acts, either songs or some comical farce. During the many presentations that we attended we observed that the audience was generally only a passive receptor, although they may have reflected different emotions to the theme during its presentations. However, at the drama's end, while the people returned to their homes, or while a group of friends joined for a drink, there was conversation about the work, it's significance, and the performance of the actors. Often the father and mother would comment on the play's content, and then, placing themselves in the protaganist's role, would finish by asking themselves, "what would I do if I were the forsaken wife?" These observations sometimes led to heated discussions. There never was an interchange of impressions between the actors and the audience.

B. The Why: Traditional Use and Use in the Project

A number of us were interested in utilizing various artistic forms in the Project's activities. We thought that we could use the modes of puppet and campesino theaters to achieve more audience participation, which would then be a more creative form of presentation. The games utilized in the development of numeracy and literacy programs, and the games used for social-awareness are all activities which require active participation. And, hence, are excellent for consciousness-raising exercises. Nevertheless, we believed that the use of the theater would be a more effective way of introducing social-consciousness concepts.

We knew that the traditional theater had been used as a form of relating stories and histories for the entertainment of the people. Before, the only audience reaction had been to applaud at the end of the work. Using other types of theater pieces, we were hoping to achieve different reactions; pieces that would represent the actual situations of the community members. The theater should be utilized as an instrument of entertainment but at the same time, to raise the conscienceness

of a people about their culture.

C. Types of Artistic Expression

In the Project we have defined theater as an artistic form, in unstructured and spontaneous, that offers the campesino who wants to participate, an opportunity to portray real situations without being threatened by consequences. When this type of artistic expression happens in a harmonious environment, in which the group identifies with the theme, and questions and discusses the results, the presentations serve as a tool in the process of learning. This allows the group to consider alternatives that previously were not at their disposal.

The theatrical forms of expression chosen in the Project are flexible, adaptable, efficient, and inexpensive in their ability to communicate educational content, generate ideas, and self-awareness. The theater has been converted into a method of consciousness-raising. Reflection on the theme of the play causes the spectator to place himself in this reality and he begins to question the situations in which man lives. In many cases, this reflection, causes him to search for solutions to these dramatized situations. If action is not taken, the community finds itself in a state of unrest. We consider that the theater, without this problematizing of reality, will continue to keep the spectator at a distance.

In the activities of the Project five types of theatrical expression have evolved: 1) the puppet theater, 2) the Cabezones, 3) the traditional campesino theater, 4) the social drama and 5) the empirical theater.

This technical note describes how these artistic forms have been used in rural Ecuador. For the most part, we will discuss the puppet theater, how we arrive at the communities to make the presentation, how the theme was chosen, and the presentations and participation of the community members. Following will be a description of the campesino theater, the origin and preparation of the actors, the selection of theme, the presentation and participation of the community in this theatrical form along with the social-drama and empirical theater.

The majority of quotes that appear in this note were taken from dialogues with members of the Ecuador Project, with the campesino

communities of Ecuador, and the members of the Center for International Education of the UMass during 1973-1974.

II. Puppets and Cabezones*

Puppets have been used in many places for literacy programs, to communicate information on nutrition, health, family well being and planning, etc. The World Education Organization has used puppets in their literacy and family planning programs. Bill Baird, author of Puppets and Population has said that puppets are succesful because they are dolls. When an actor performs people need to know who he is, why is he there, why does he know more than others, who invited him, etc. But a puppet acts and nobody asks why. Puppets are adaptable and transportable to whatever place and situation and can perform for one person or a group, large or small. But what is more important than these considerations, is that the entire community can participate.

The project has emphasized that the puppets are only dolls that speak and act only because someone gives them life. Alone, they have no ability: what they say represents the thoughts that the puppeter wants to express. We have tried to make the puppets not appear as supernatural beings with extraordinary powers.

In The Project we have constructed puppets and developed various theater pieces with the participation of the communities with whom we were working. These presentations often take place after we have received an invitation from a community. When we arrive in a new community, the facilitators spend a few days there, interchanging impressions with the people and making plans for a presentation.

A. Initial contact in the Communities

Whenever the facilitators arrive for the first time in a community to see if the people would be interested in having a presentation, they always bring the cabezones*. The Cabezones attract everyone. Upon seeing the cabezones, a large group of people gather. The children put on the

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*Huge heads a meter in height and 50 centimeters to a meter in diameter.)

heads, playing and laughing,and run through the streets followed by the other children insisting on their right to have a turn wearing the cabezon. As the number of children and noise increases, people want to know what is taking place, and soon everyone knows that there is to be a "puppet show."

On one occaision some adults put on the heads, someone arrived with a guitar, and began to sing. Shortly the cabezones were dancing. This opened the way for the rest of the activities. In this way the cabezones often serve to inform the people that something new has arrived. At first we asked ourselves if the cabezones could be used to stimulate interest in the theater functions: would the campesinos feel less timid acting behind the masks?

These answers are determined when the facilitator converses with the people concerning the content of the piece that they desire to have performed. This is necessary since the content should always be in relation to the experience of the community. If it is the first time, a story or something historic is presented to give an idea of what the theater is about. Later, with more confidence, it is possible to present other pieces that relate an event that has happened in the community.

B. Selection of Content and Preparation

The community reaches an agreement on a theme for the play and this is incorporated into the presentation. At UMass we had the opportunity to meet two of the people responsible for this work in Ecuador and they gave us a presentation. They presented the case of an illiterate campesino who had received a letter from his son, who was working in the capital. No one could read the letter, and it was suggested that he take it to the political lieutenant since he surely would know how to read. The political lieutenant, who in truth couldn't read, opened the letter and took the money that the son had sent to his father (the father expected the son to send him money, and upon not finding it in the letter, he felt that his son had let him down.) This presented the theme of illiteracy and how it prohibits the campesinos from being able to defend themselves from the political authorities.

The content of the plays are always coordinated with the actual conditions of the sites where they are presented, representing actual sit-

uations in the life of the community. If there is a problem, the puppets present this, but without giving solutions. The themes, as stated, consist of incidents relevant to the community: critical analysis of persons in the community, problems with authority, religious problems, illiteracy, lack of education, etc.

C. Presentation

When the topic has been selected, the site for the presentation is prepared. This may be in the open air, in the park, school, church, etc. The first time a puppet show was given in a community the project members arrived with a stage that they had built. They had spent a little money building the stage with triplex wood and other materials. After giving a few performances to the community, one of the campesinos said:

"Companero, this is really nice. We have never seen anything like this before. But, how can we do this? Here we don't have a stage like yours, here we only have chahwarqueros (a fiberous plant also called cabuya) and straw mats. Only this. We couldn't give a play like yours." This incident reminded the members that they were outside of the real situation. They left the stage at the community and from then on sought how to make impromptu stages in the places where the plays would be presented. For example, in the presentation given at UMass a stage was formed by placing two chairs on a table and covering this with a poncho. This served as the stage for the puppets and the puppeteers were able to remain hidden behind.

When presentations are given in the communities, ideal places are sought out: a window, a door frame, underneath a table, etc. At times, two campesinos extend a poncho or blanket that serves as the curtain.

D. Community participation

During the play the puppets speak to one another as well as to the audience. In the presentation at UMass, for example, the puppets asked one of the participants to read a letter, since the father was not satisfied with what the political lieutenant had told him. The youngster took the letter, but neither was he able to read it. The letter was in Spanish and the youngster spoke only English. This captured the idea that many times

foreigners arrive at the communities without being able to communicate due to the language barrier. This can create a series of situations that generally provoke confusion and bad feelings.

Eventually someone was able to read the letter and the campesino realized that there had been money. What happened? Where was the money? The crowd began to shout that the political official had robbed it. No solution was offered. After the play, there was discussion of what had happened. In the campesino community, there was discussion in which everyone participated, trying to find a solution to the problem. This led to others relating their own experiences. Soon the play was forgotten and the people were reflecting on and discussing the situation of the community, it's problems and how these could be solved.

Generally, during the play, the campesinos approach the puppets to see of what they are made. They manipulate them, observe and converse with them. Once familiar, they begin making short skits. Rapidly they reach agreement on a theme to enact, then one hears, "You will be Juan, you Pedro, you, Maria Manuela." At first they are a little timid, but the important thing is that the skit is spontaneous. They laugh, participate, dialogue with the puppets and whoever else is present.

We have been able to observe that in contrast with the theater group at UMass, the presentations made by the community have more natural action and the characters appear to become more real. Since the people know one another, they often try to personify friends and neighbors during the play.

As previously mentioned, after the presentation, the piece is analyzed. Often the members forget about this and begin to analyze their own situation. The puppets serve to generate the discussion and reflexion of these groups in front of their own situations. Someone said:

"In the moments of reflexion there is nothing to hold them back. When the play ends, another reaction has grown. No longer does one only hear just applause."

At one place stones were thrown during a presentation. It wasn't because the play was not liked, but because one of the audience was an authority figure. And the people felt threatened, given the circumstances

the play had stirred up.

It isn't important only that the puppets act but that the campesino also performs. Normally, the campesino won't speak in front of a group, but this changes when they use the puppets as a vehicle of communication. The performances they give are quite good; one can readily appreciate the natural,human and artistic quality of the performances. These works also achieve a wide participation.

Usually, at the close of the plays the campesinos want to know how to make the puppets. The following is an explanation of the process:

1) Construction of Puppets and Cabezones

a) Puppets

Using a sock or stocking, fill it with sand, dried leaves, corn, etc., filling it according to the size of the desired head. Insert a stick about the thickness of a person's finger, tie, leaving a ball. Rub the filled sock with oil or shortening to ensure that the sock will not stick to the paper to be applied next. Now, begin placing pieces of wet or shredded paper around the ball. Newspaper print will serve but napkins are much easier to use being a lighter paper. Continue putting pieces entirely around the ball until a layer is formed, then on top of this put a coat of liquid glue. Now put another layer of paper then one of glue, continuing until a head is formed. Now begin forming the nose, lips, ears, mouth, etc. (each person giving his puppet different characteristics). When the face has finally taken shape, put it out in the sun to dry. If the heads need to be completed in a hurry, they can be placed in an oven. When the puppet is dry, remove the stick. The beans will fall out and then the sock can be removed. Allow the inside to dry. The head should be of sufficient thickness to guarantee its durability.

Painting: Paint the eyes, mouth, etc., giving the desired characteristic; happy, sad, angry, etc. (it is necessary that the figure be painted so that it can be seen at a distance). The features should be as simple and rustic as possible, since a sophisticated puppet will not be as appreciated.

When the puppet is painted, make it a costume of old or useless clothing. This may be glued to the puppet's neck that can be made from

wool or cotton and a sombrero added. Once dressed, it is brought to life by inverting the hand in the hole, and manipulating with the fingers.

There are other ways to make puppets. For example, we have seen puppets in the form of animals made from wool crochet work. Others can be made completely from cloth, rounding out and filling the head, then painting the features.

b) Cabezones

Form: First, an earthen jar or a basket can be used. Use the same methods as are used for the puppets. Rub on the oil or shortening, and then apply the layers of paper and glue. It is necessary to use thicker paper for the cabezones such as paper bags, or the paper of cartons. This paper has to be dampened thoroughly until it has a paste like consistency and is easily molded. The mold can be made in halves or all at once, splitting it in two after it has dried. After drying the two halves are joined and secured by adding more paper.

To guarantee the durability, the cabezones have to be made sufficiently thick. Then make the eyes, nose, etc. (holes are made for the eyes nose and mouth). Then leave it to dry.

Painting: When dry, paint them with deep, vivid, but not to shiny colors. The colors should be of a natural hue. The features need to be larger than normal so that the expressions stands out. For example, if one wants to make a chapre (a person of the country, campo, half white, colored by the cold) emphasis need be given to the lungs.

When the cabezon is ready it should measure a meter high and around one half to one meter in diameter. When thecabezon is on, it should rest on the shoulders of the person. The person should be able to see since his eyes will be on the level of the hole that represents the mouth.

The stage: The stage for the puppets can be made from a window, a a door frame, or anything similar. As stated earlier, it may be necessary to conform with whatever is available at the site of the presentation, a table, the back of a chair, etc. Two people can manually suspend a poncho or mat to serve as the curtain.

III. Campesino Theater

a) Origin of the theater in the campo: Traditional Theater

We had seen professional theater groups such as "La Barricada", the Teatro de Ensayo of the Casa de Cultura (Experimental Theater) in Quito, along with others of either professional or semi-professional caliber. The natural theme of their theatrical works have been confrontation and protest. These groups not only permit, but encourage, dialogue and are a stupendous example that allowed us to organize an empirical theater group - in other words, a theater group in which no one persons has more experience than another.

Certainly, a few of us had at sometime played a part in this or that producition, but we were all very far from knowing techniques and systems of the theater. Nevertheless, we thought it possible to initiate a program of theatrical works, for which we decided first to organize a small interested group. This is how we initiated a series of talks in different communities where there were facilitators from UMass. We succeeded in establishing the San Miguel (a community situated between Riobamba and San Andres) group. This group was attending the meetings called by one of the second generation facilitators, who was very interested in and liked this type of activity. Once the community with whom the teatrical group would organize was selected and established, we began the process of preparing a work that would be presented by the group.

b) Selection and Preparation of Content

At first, naturally,we tried to find known works by national authors, but then, during the meetings we were having, we realized that it would be better if the group created it's own work. Thus after several meetings of discussing the issue, we decided to creat a piece using Fotonovel #1, "Between Love and Hope" as a base. The decision was made with the realization that this fotonovela already had been distributed in many communities and especially in all the communities where the theater group would want to go.

Various persons already were familiar with the novel. We wanted,

as a member of the groups said, "to (re)affirm what the fotonovela said," so that the communities would be made more aware of the problems represented in the novel. At first, it was a little bit difficult, due to our lack of experience, to produce a noteworthy theatrical piece. Nevertheless success was achieved, and, modesty aside, the piece was interesting.

Here we should mention the types of individuals that formed the group: the community facilitator who headed and directed the group and who fulfilled various jobs that ranged from agricultural to construction work; two agriculturalists; two professional chauffers; a tailor's apprentice; a student and two women who worked as domestic helpers. All are campesinos of San Miguel.

Let's see how we succeeded in creating the work. The group, which from now on will be called the group of Manuel, met together. Each member read the fotonovela separately. After this, following the technique used by the UMass team, the group reflected on the content of the work and each member decided which role was the most pleasing to him or her. Observations were made as to how Manuel Santi or the Patron should act. The group also commented on the attitude of the Political Lieutenant and considered various endings for the work. Keeping in mind the observations, we set out reconstructing the fotonovela and creating the characters, but always maintaining the central theme. First drafts were made and finally after a certain time, we had a small theater piece.

In agreement with the urgings of the individuals of the groups of Manuel, the actors and their respective roles were chosen, scripts were given out for study, and after approximately one month the rehearsals were brought to an end. We rehearsed every night in the house of the facilitator, which was also the community meeting house. During the course of the month a series of observations and changes were made with the aim of making the dialogue more flexible and less monotonous. Finally the group decided it was ready. A series of presentations in various campesino communities were arranged, which necessitated the establishment of a budget to cover transportation, food, and additional allowances, since the plays were free of charge.

C. Contact with the communities

As soon as the play was ready, a plan was made for its presentation to different communities. The facilitator of the theatrical group's

community together with various other members of the Project visited the communities to talk with the people about the possibility of presenting the work. The idea was readily accepted in all the communities; for many this would be the first time for such an event. The community members themselves made the itinerary.

D. Presentation

The presentation of the theater piece requires no special stage or setting. Since the action is to represent the daily life of the community, the imposition of prefabricated scenery might give a false image to this reality. Any atmosphere is good, out of doors or in the school.

When a play is presented,it is accompanied by various acts of amateur artists, often members of the community who sing, play the guitar, recite, etc. The work is presented within a circle formed by the audience. The actors are not made-up, presenting themselves as they are, allowing the community members to be able to identify with them. Many times the actors perform from within the audience; and on various occasions the audience has revealed how it becomes involved and reacts in the decisive moments of the play. This is the effect we are looking for: to cause the audience to react. This is not always achieved because often circumstances do not permit it.

At the end of the play the members of the cast exchanged impressions with the audience. This is the most important part of the presentation, because it is when the people begin realizing the situation in which they are living. They have often said,

"We know we are poor,that we can't read or write. We know we are mistreated. But this is all we know". But with the theater pieces, they began questioning the situation.

"Why are we poor? Why are we exploited and mistreated?" They began to discuss possible solutions to these problems, and this brought various alternatives.

"Really this is the fundamental part, without the reflexion and the discussion of the communities on the situation presented in the play, the work would be useless."

Many people are able to grasp the message while others let it pass,

without searching for an explanation. "Yes, we are poor, that's a fact, and everyone knows it." When the spectators did not react to the situation, the message of the theater was not effective.

1) Social Drama

In the majority of places where the work was given, after reflection and discussion, the communities decided to present, in that moment, a social-drama. These people, for the most part had never had the opportunity to act out this type of activity.

Similar to the way community members took the puppets in hand and express themselves to the audience, the spectators presented themselves before the public in order to enact something in the community that might have happened recently.

After the presentation of the social-drama, everyone participated in a discussion to analyze its content as well as that of the original production. This allowed the community to gain a new dimension in regards to their own situation. On one occasion one of the campesinos said:

> "Previously, we thought that we were the problem, that the problem was within our communities. We thought a solution was lacking. And if a solution appeared it always came from outside the community from the "blanco". Many times these solutions were elemental, so simple that we might have been able to make them ourselves. But we didn't have the skills to contend with these situations. The theater has really helped. But, naturally, not only the theater."

As the campesino said, it wasn't just the theater which helped, since the results of this type of work can not be attributed to only one determined action. It is the result a multiplicity of actions and different situations, but fundamentally, it is the result of faith and confidence in one's own capability.

We could also mention another theater group that was organized, or better said, improvised during the Project "Feria Educativa".* Taking advantage of the previous experience, in each of the communities

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*The Feria Educativa (Education Fair) was a Project activity which the campesino communities attended for a two day period. The Feria consisted of a combination of activities related with theater, puppets, games, songs, cabezones, etc. Please see appendix).

visited by the group besides the previously planned activities, small theatrical acts were also improvised following the techniques of the social-drama. To achieve this, during the first day of the Ferias' stay in a village, a group set out to investigate the most important problems of the community. These were then presented during the second day's activity. In this way, the Feria placed emphasis on the communities actual situations. This form of contact yielded many positive results in stimulating the communities to participate in similar programs, expecially since the theme presented were of great importance to the participants. The people often represented by the players were:

1) The political lieutenant - a believable demonstration of the relation of power's exploitation by the authority with the campesino.
2) The priest of the community - a traditional system of oppression.
3) The leaders - comparison between the traditional system and the model of the facilitator.
4) La Minga*- demonstration that there is strength in unity.
5) Construction of schools - reflexion on the bureaucratic difficulties in achieving this.
6) Family planning - a fair concept of the problem
7) Exodus from campo to city - enactment of the changes that happened to the person who goes to the city.
8) Illiteracy - this theme has presented itself with a great variety of circumstance.

These have been the most common themes represented by the community members, although on certain occasions there has been a change of topic.

2) Experiencial Theater

Another type of theater experience we have had in the communities is what we call the empiric theater. This form is based on immediate and spontaneous experiences that involve the public without their realizing that they are a part of the action. In this case, the actors provoke and prompt this involvement. It is a touchy experience and much skill is needed to keep the audience calm. When the audience is calm, a series of questions are planted. "What happened." Why did you react this or thay way?" The result of this dialogue is the question, what can we do?" The people then begin to discuss the possible solutions that might change the sit-

*communal work done by neighbors

uation that caused such anxiety.

This event that happened in a community where the actors were facilitating audience participation, deserves special mention. About 200 persons had gathered in the school. We were five actors. While only one person acted in the stage area, the other four were mixed among the crowd. The actor in the center began a monologue directed at the audience concerning the irresponsibility of the peons, and with insults tried to obligate them to work. Obviously, the audience were the peons. The four actors in the crowd began a series of protests and incited the spectators to react. There followed a harsh exchange of words between the stage and the audience. Tension mounted and it was necessary to resort to all the known methods to quiet the people, who suddenly felt that this situation was equal to the one in which they lived daily in their work for the patrons. It was an escape, a momentary liberation, followed by a period of deep reflection which produced the following inquiry:

> "Why do we remain silent when the patron insults us? Now since it was only a comedy, we almost attacked the patron. Why don't we react in real life like we have at this moment? If we reacted this way in real life, will the patron have us arrested? Are we afraid in front of the patron?"

From all this came the question, "What must we do?"

IV Cost

In relation to the type of community work the campesino theater promotes, the cost is low. In the case of the Project, the actors are volunteers. No stage props are used, and it isn't necessary to buy costumes or make-up. The cost of transportation and food is paid for with the money that is provided by the places where the presentations take place. The actors generally lodge in the house of facilitators or in the community meeting house, or in the school.

We know of a group of youths in Mexico that have organized a campesino theater called the "Mascarones". They perform in the communities that ask them to come. They live a certain amount of time in the village. The villagers provide food and lodging and with the money they receive

(which is little), they manage to cover transportation costs. Many of the group work to earn their living, but this isn't a full time job. These youths have dedicated themselves to the campesino theater. They often sell handcrafts that they make, and with the money are able to pay their own basic expenses and continue their performances.

Cost - (Ecuador)

1 puppet - paper napkins or toilet tissue
- paint
- old clothes or material
- corn, (beans, dried) etc.
- sock
- stick
- glue or paste

A cabezon needs more paper, paint, etc. Also, an earthen jug or (woven) basket is needed. The cost is a little more than the puppets.

The stage (depends on available resources)

1) mat = .20
   wire = .04
   skeleton= .20
2) plywood = 2.33
   paint = .20
   cloth = .08
3) a window
   door frame = Free
   other

V Observations and Implications

Many times the puppet and campesino theater have been presented simultaneously, since the content of the two is often the same. In many cases it is easier to give a puppet presentation first. This allows the participants to manipulate the puppets and gradually become less inhibited. After this, it is easier to put the puppets aside and present a social-drama.

The aims of all the theater forms are the same; personal growth, human advancement, and social awareness. The group has worked principally

with groups and communities known by the Project members: cooperatives, campesino associations and other organized groups. The theater isn't destined for one particular group; rather it is for those who wish to know what it is about and those who would like to participate.

The presentations were designed to conform as realistically as possible to the actual situations. Also the theater is not given alone. Not once did the groups present only the puppet or campesino theater. There have always been other ingredients, like the music of the community, etc. This allows different views of the situation presented in the play, and allows more opportunity for the audience to feel a part of the program.

The puppet theater presentations dictate neither models or solutions. The puppets are dolls that come alive only when manipulated by someone. The risk is that the people might see the puppet as something magical, saying fantastic things. Once a campesino said to us: "Before it was the blancos who told us what to do; and now are the puppets doing the same?"

If the community has a problem,it is the community who should seek its solution. The role of the theater is only to plant the problem and then analyze and discuss it so that the community will react.

The presentations are open to anyone, but on occasions there have been requests to perform before a specific group; such as, for certain school children aged 12 to 13. This has not been the goal of the group, since it is preferable to perform for mixed groups: the theater is for everyone.

The cabezones have been used only to create an atmosphere for the presentations of the puppet or campesino theaters. We have asked ourselves many questions about the possible use of the cabezones; for example, could they be used to stimulate the Spontaneous Theater? If it is true that the campesinos feel less inhibited expressing their ideas through the puppets, would they feel equally secure from within the cabezones? We have found that the cabezones combine the imaginative environment of the puppets with the physical and high-activity,popular theater. Nevertheless, we need to investigate further the possible uses of the cabezones, not only for creating an imaginative environment, but as an instrument in the learning process.

The theater group of Manuel was the first who dared to take this

artistic form to other environments. We found that this type of theater, related to the traditional theater, was a surprise for all.

The social-drama, that grew from the theatrical experiences in the communities, is what we call the spontaneous theater. The method has been used in training sessions. For example, when the discussions became very theoretical, members of the group began a social-drama. The dramatization made the discussion more concrete.

We have found the most valuable aspect of the social-drama is that this form allows the individual to project his thoughts through a concrete form. In the majority of the cases, the theme and direction of the social drama were determined spontaneously by the individuals who were acting.

The presentations provoked different reactions in the communities. The majority of these were positive. On certain occasions, certain persons felt threatened by the performances, especially if they presented or had in the past held positions of authority that were considered negative. On one occasion stones were thrown at the car in which the facilitators and actors were riding. The person who threw the stones was the political lieutenant. The play had presented scenes where the campesinos were mistreated by the authority. The presentation angered him, causing him to take this action.

Finally, it is necessary to realize the harm that can come from the use of the puppets or other forms if the objectives are not well defined and the policy of action does not consider the human being as the agent of his own growth.

The best assurance that the puppet and campesino theaters do not become means of indoctrination is to guarantee the participation of the campesino in the formation of the themetic content of the plays.

The Project has tried always to have the presentations based on mutual respect; trying neither to carry messages nor have objectives that are formulated without the participation of the group. This guarantees that the presentations originate from the environment of the communities. The theater is used to raise the awareness of the groups whose culture is respected.

VI Conclusion

The social-drama has been the most effective form, because it is the easiest in which the campesino can participate. The puppet theater is important because it is a means of eliminating inhibitions and allowing the campesino to express his artistic capacities. Also, the puppets are easy to make and inexpensive. The cabezones help to create a harmonious environment, but their other forms of application are not completely defined.

The characteristics of the theater require more experience on the part of the actors and facilitators, since they need to be able to channel the emotional reactions of the campesinos.

During 1974-75, twenty five presentations in different communities were given by the theater group. The major difficulty confronted by the group was a lack of time, since some members were students and others workers. This inhibited the rehearsals and made spontaneous presentations impossible. This has made us think about organizing groups that could provide the necessary time to complete these activities. For this it would be necessary to form some 10 groups to act in different communities, choosing the most opportune time to give the performances.

APPENDIX

THE BIBLIOBUS

The Bibliobus, as its name indicates, is a library on wheels. However, the Department of Adult Education of the Ministry of Education has not utilized this bus to its fullest capacity, but has sent it to the marginal and illiterate sections of the population where books serve no purpose.

The Non-Formal Education Program of the UMass proposed to the Ministry of Education that the bus should be used as a means of carrying educational messages more relevent to various communities that find themselves on the margin of literacy. This how the idea of using the bus in the project called Feria Educativa (Education Fair) was born. Carlos Carlos Povede, who was the Director of the Department of Education of Adults and Patricio Barriga, Director of the Non-Fromal Education Project of the UMass signed a contract February 1, 1974,for the program that began the 4th of March of that year.

As the project was one of mutual colaboration, the Minstry promised to contribute, along with the bus a(chofer)(driver) and two representative professors of the Department of Adult Education. The UMass contributed non-formal materials, two members and another vehicle.

Characteristics and Equipment of the Bibliobus:

A Bibliobus is a large vehicle with two seats and a desk in the front. The walls have wide sills that can be used for placing books, magazines, and other materials. The equipments consists of a mimeograph, a movie projector, a generator , amplifiers, audio visual system. It includes, as well,various musical instruments: accordian, guitars, maracas, etc. The cabezones are part of the more showy equipment.

The Bibliobus was a work instrument of the Feria Educativa which promoted education through an enjoyable two day experience using a variety of learning materials, such as the puppet theater, campesino theater, educational games, lectures, music and films.

With these objectives in mind the goals were:

1) To awaken the rural communities' interest in education;
2) To test the effectivenss of the non-formal methods and materials in transmitting education; and
3) To extend the Department of Adult Education's radius of operation.

The communities to which the Feria were taken were chosen two months in advance. First, a consulting visit was made to find out if the communities were interested and,then, later they were informed of the dates of the visit. The criteria for selection was 1) that they be campesino communities, 2) that they be communities where the Non-Formal Education Project of UMass had intervened with the Project of Facilitators and 3) that the communities accept the visit.

All 16 communities were chosen in the provinces of Tunguchua and Chimborazo. Eight persons participated in the project. Threee were from the Adult Department of Education of the Ministry of Education - Hugo de Jesus "oreno and Luis Cardenas, professors and Nelson Velastequi, chauffer of the Bibliobus. From the Non-Formal Education Project of the UMass were Carlos Moreno and Amparo Borja. Three campesinos who had previous contact with the project were chosen - Manuel Pacheco, facilitator, Ernestina Martinez and Marcelina Yuquilema.

This group worked as a team doing whatever was necessary to complete the Feria's activities in each community. No one had specific tasks. Everyone participated whether it was assembling the puppet theater, compiling data for the periodical SOMOS, painting signs and posters, even in the domestic chores such as cooking, shopping and getting water in places where it was scarce. This group, while not homogeneous, lived, shared, and worked as a team for 5 weeks. Leadership was not determined in any absolute manner. The Team had to coordinate activities within the group to respond to the circumstances. If someone was absent, the activities continued nonetheless. Certainly there were problems, but these did not affect the team work of the Feria.

The first day was dedicated to contacting the local professors, the professors of adult education, community leaders, facilitators, etc. with the intention of obtaining information for the periodical SOMOS, which was published by the Feria Educativa in each community. With the information obtained, a social-drama could be staged employing some special event or community problem.

The loudspeakers of the Bibliobus invited all the community members to the film showings in the evening. These were of a recreational nature.

There was always a large turnout to see the movies. The group took advantage of this to inform and invite the people to come and participate in the activities of the following day.

The events of the second day had more educational content and allowed the community members to participate. In the afternoon groups were organized to play the nonformal games such as Hacienda, Mercada (Market), Dados (dice) of Silabas (Syllables) and Numeros (Numbers).

The Feria had the task of publishing a periodical in each community, the idea being to compile community information,then publish it. The title page read "SOMOS, a Publication of the Feria Educativa", with the understanding that the Feria was composed of the group of the Bibliobus, the people of the community. Twelve issue were published. The periodical had an Editorial whose themes ranged from the story of an accident to discussion of the necessity of unity in the community.

The periodical had a section on "Health and Well Being" and other sections called "Seen and Heard", "Around the Community", and "Local News." This last section talked of parties, harvests, sports events and plans of the community. There was also a section entitled "Free Time" that included riddles, stories, traditions, poetry, popular songs and songs that the team of the Feria sometimes dedicated to the community. Also songs of the community were published in the periodical. Since the publication of songs was such a success, this was repeated in various issues. Songs are included in volumes5, 6, and 7 in Spanish and 8 and 9 in Quechua and Spanish.

The members of the Feria encouraged the community members to write articles. This encouragement brought articles from a facilitator, the president of a local church chapter, a campesino, the Education Supervisor of Tungurahua Province and various students.

Yet the periodical fell short and wasn't really "the voice of the people", since the members of the Feria necessarily had to write the majority of the articles. The periodical tried to publish articles relevant to the community and, although, for the most part this was accomplished, certain setbacks were obvious due to the use of sophisticated language and the paternal tone in offering advice. Nevertheless, the publication of a periodical in such a short time required a great effort from the staff.

In short, SOMOS was very well received in all the communities where it was published and distributed. Much of the success is due to the fact that this was the first time that a publication of this nature had come into being, and the community dwellers were flattered to find familiar names, stories of friends or news concerning the dates of upcoming fiestas or harvests in a periodical.

Before passing to the general recommendations, the following commentaries are opinions of the author (Amparo Borja) of this document:

The Feria was a pleasurable event in the visited communities. I say this because this is what was expressed in various dialogues. I believe this classification of pleasurable owes itself to various reasons: The methods and techniques of the Feria were of an educational nature, without being didactic; 2) the Feria wasn't established with the intention of giving a fun performance and then leaving; and 3) the campesino was considered the subject of the education and not the object.

The Feria took place in campesino communities in the sierras of Ecuador where the topography is very irregular and the cold prevails. Generally, the campesino lives from agriculture, and works from 6:00 in the morning to 6:00 in the evening. A description of a typical community would be a group of houses, the majority of adobe with straw roofs, a main plaza, a church, and a school or house suited for giving classes. Few of these communities have potable water or electricity. Many of the communities hope to construct a church, a school or a community house.

Within this environment, the Feria was something new, different, fun, informative and surrounded by an aura of enthusiasm as much for the members of the Feria as for the campesino who participated in it. Finally for me the Feria was an experience of learning and communication with the Ecuadorian campesino.

General Recommendations

- A Feria Educativa should be a permanent resource for an educational program whose participants are from the marginal rural sector.

- To undertake a project of this nature, it is necessary that the working members know one another previously. This group should receive

training in human relations and techniques concerning the area to be visited. The group should have members who speak the language of the communities to be visited.

- The work period should not be more than three consecutive weeks, because the work is intense. It was noted in the Feria that after 3 weeks fatigue set in and production dropped.

- Upon choosing the communities, it is necessary to take into account the religious factor that, in the majority of cases, divides the community and makes the work of the Feria even more difficult. In some cases there is not only division, but hate between the Catholic and Protestant communities. On one occasion, the Bibliobus was stoned passing through a Catholic community because the people believed that "Biblio" meant Bible and that the bus was a group of evangelists. Members of the Bibliobus had to cover the sign to avoid further incidents.

Suggestions for a more effective use of cabezones: The cabezones were used by the Feria Educativa to attract the people and entertain the children, but the staff of the Feria believes that the cabezones also could be used for educational purposes. For example, having previously made a tape on a selected topic, the cabezones, using mime as a medium, could be the carriers of the message while the tape is being broadcast through loudspeakers. This would be performed in the open air so that more people might attend and enjoy the event. In this manner the cabezones are converted into a type of gigantic puppet.

Costs for the assembly of a similar project: Aside from the costs of a fully equiped Bibliobus, the other expenditures are mainly those of transportation, equipment, maintenance, materials and necessities of the team. In the Feria Educativa referred to in this document, the costs were the following:

Transportation	- gas and oil for two vehicles	$ 166.66
Staff Provisions	- 8 participants	1166.66
Materials	- puppets, paper, ink, batteries, ribbon, paint, etc.	520.83
		$ 1854.16

The original plan of the Feria called for a follow-up inquire of the project three months after its termination. Nevertheless, this follow-up didn't end in June as originally planned but 10 months after its iniation.

A questionnaire was prepared by the members of the inquiry containing questions such as:

In your community what was liked most about the Bibliobus?

Which of the following methods has your community used since the bus's visit: Games, Puppets, Theater, Rural Newspaper, Discussion groups on the fotonovela, Books.

What should the Bibliobus do on it's next visit?

The interviews were made with rural elementary school teachers, adult education teachers, and inhabitants of the visited communities, who, during the dialogue, also were asked questions like:

What was the Bibliobus?

What was best about it?

What activity did the people like most?

What happened during its visit?

Have you noted a change in the people and the community?

How could this program be improved?

Ten communities were selected for evaluation, five in Fungurahua Province and five in Chimborazo Province. The majority of those interviewed stated that the Bibliobus had much impact on the people and that similar visits should be made. Here is one comment:

"I was very pleased by all of the program because it presented new ideas which caused one to think, but it would be good if they would advertise when they will return..."

Some professors commented that they now were using puppets in classes, especially in grammar classes and social hours.

Most liked were the films and puppet theater. One campesino said:

"The best of all for me were the puppets. At the same time they entertained and diverted while presenting themes that were the problems and necessities of the community."

The commentaries concerning the cabezones were of admiration and awe because they had never been seen before.

The comment of one community leader was:

"We have organized a group to present dramas related with the problems and anxieties of our community. We have even presented these in surrounding areas."

Concerning the desire that the Bibliobus make a return visit, the following was heard:

"It would be good if future visits were made because now that the seed has been planted, it has to be nurtured.

TECHNICAL NOTES OF THE ECUADOR NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROJECT

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13.	Fotonovela (1976)	-	Description of the development and use of the fotonovela as an instrument of literacy and consciousness awareness in the community.

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